2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

would deserve, he would need"; *bel-'own* (for *beṣ-ṣaḥîḥ*), there is no objection, with the consent of all. 2. *Tawâfiž* or *bel-wafaḳ*, *beṣ-ṣadfe*; *tawâfaḳû* or *taṣâdafû*: they happened to settle it among themselves, they punished each other. 3. *Rṣâṣ* are balls, usually leaden ones. *'Ademlijje* is an old rifle with which the marksman is so well acquainted that he never misses his aim. *Saḥar* may mean the lungs, liver, or stomach, while *ma'âlîž* signifies the heart and the arteries leading to it. 4. "My hands have mixed, *anžeḥan*, this powder." The Bedouins frequently prepare their own gunpowder, trusting it more than that sold by the wandering merchants, who mix it with crushed charcoal, while the Bedouin knows that his powder is pure, *naẓîf*. *Anḳaḥt hal-binduḳ*, however, may mean "I loaded this rifle." The sound of a shot is compared to the sound of a meteor falling on a high hill. According to the Rwala this is a frequent occurrence, and they preserve the pieces of broken meteors as keepsakes. 5. Thus 'Awde threatens to shootRšejd, if he does not give up Ruṣna.Ršejd would like to marry the girl secretly, but that is no longer possible, as everybody is talking about her and she is looked upon in the same manner as the moon or the dome dedicated to some Mohammedan saint, which can be observed from afar. Both 'Awde and Ruṣna were encamped at that time in an-Nuḳra, a region south of Damascus, where along the old Pilgrim Road to Mecca many white domes were built in honor of various saints. Ruṣna is then likened to a dome trodden by no man as yet, hence a virgin. 6. She has very thick hair and her tresses end in ostrich feathers entwined in the hair, *zerâniž*. 7. All that Ruṣna handles succeeds, grows, takes life, just as the *ṭrajjâwi* rain gives new life to the grass seed. The constellation of the Pleiades catches water in a large bailing bucket and then pours it over the scorched lowland. *Rijâṣ* are depressions in the bare plains into which most of the water runs, fertilising them also with the mud it carries along. The seeds of the annuals, which sometimes lie dormant for two to four years in these depressions, begin to sprout after an abundant *ṭrajjâwi* rain, and with more rain the lowland becomes a blooming meadow. 8. The thought of Ruṣna quickens the beating of 'Awde's heart. The camels do not like the pasture in the settled territory; they yearn for the inner desert, to which they proceed either to the east of Damascus or to the south of Der'at. Near the latter town rises the hillock of

2:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

right hand he holds his staff or a rifle, to which he ties his kerchief for a flag, and points it in the direction of the threatening danger. *Ḥṣân* always means a stallion, *faras* a mare, *ḫejl* horses in general. The *ḥṣân* is, as a rule, more enduring than the mare. *Al-ḥṣân balad* means "the stallion became tired," implying that he stopped moving owing to oversweating or because he was so weakened by heat and thirst that he could not escape from the enemy hard in pursuit of him. *Zaban*, he protected, took his part. He that is threatened with death or is in fear of an avenger asks the protection of one more powerful, who will then shield and bring him to a place where he can live in peace, *zabaneh*.

Já 'ejâl dukkú-l-barûd
lel-moṛrebi muḫḫ al-ḥadid
lâ budd min jowmen ja'úd
jafroḳ wadîden 'an wadîd.

My sons, pound the powder;
For al-Moṛrebi we need steel,
And the day is sure to come
Which will take the lover
from his sweetheart.

A Turkish officer, known to the Rwala only by the name of al-Moṛrebi, was in command of the regular troops who drove back the Bedouins whenever they tried to encamp in the settled territory. This happened in the seventies of the last century, when it was the policy of the Turkish Government to protect the *felláḥín* from the Bedouins. The Rwala, who had lost many men, thirsted for revenge and as they could go neither to Syria nor to Irak they manufactured their powder themselves. *Muḫḫ al-ḥadid* is steel. They wished to shoot al-Moṛrebi with a steel bullet, thinking that an ordinary one of lead would not kill him.

Narmi-l-'aša benḥárken laṯ-ṯejr
w-en kunkubb al-adwas wara'
bemdenisláten ṣan'aken bed-dejr
berḥub 'adlát al-ḫeta'.

Before the throats [of the she-camels] we shall throw
their supper to the birds of prey,
Though the base one still lingers behind;
With spears adorned with chains made at ad-Dejr
[Driven] into the necks of mares fed from the new crop.

Benḥárken means the confusion of galloping camels and also their throats. Our riders are loath to retreat; they want